



Suzan Patton, Superintendent • David Schmidt, Curriculum Director  
Bill Bergner, President • Brian Schrag, Vice-President  
Mark Fincham • Chris Drake • Bill Skaggs • Kim Stivers • Donna Hoener-Queal  
Linda Kumberg, Clerk • Diana Albers, Treasurer • Donna Whiteman, KASB Attorney

## **Public Comment on Potential School Funding Changes In Response to the May 27, 2016, Gannon Court Order**

before the  
**House and Senate Judiciary Committees**

by  
**Suzan Patton, Superintendent  
USD 382-Pratt**  
**Also representing Kansas School Superintendents Association**

Chairman King, Chairman Barker, Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear today. It's no coincidence that our district slogan is "small schools, BIG OPPORTUNITIES." Our mission is to make sure Pratt students leave us confident in their skills and knowledge in order to compete with their Kansas peers, no matter their post-graduation path. Like students in Johnson or Sedgwick counties, our students deserve the opportunity to enroll in Advanced Placement classes or STEM programs; improve skills through focused math and reading interventions (Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports); or experience career mentoring and internships.

A small district like Pratt offers these programs because of an equitable funding mechanism. The former local option budget formula based on the 81.2 percentile of valuation per pupil will cost the state approximately \$38 million. In addition, the hold harmless provision makes sure districts will not lose money. I urge you to support this past formula to expedite the equity solution so school districts may move forward.

Parents and patrons are impatient and want a solution. They, like administrators, vacillate between anger, fear, frustration, and sadness. When the two-year plan for block grant funding was approved, administrators and parents were assured there would be no cuts. It behooves the legislature to demonstrate integrity and maintain the public's trust by working together with the Supreme Court and resolving the equity dilemma. Restoring the local option formula for state aid can serve as an interim remedy while long-term solutions are addressed. KSSA and our USA-Kansas affiliate organizations have been working on potential funding structures that could be part of those solutions and hope to be involved in those critical conversations.

After graduation, Pratt students will scatter across the state and live in your communities. The more opportunities and access to a quality education they experience, the more they will enrich our state. Honor all Kansas students by submitting the former local option formula and hold harmless provision as a solution to the equity issue.

Thank you for your consideration.

